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## Maximum Ames Music Festival

Shari Sandler  
*Iowa State University*

Katelyn Ronalds  
*Iowa State University*

Kayla Brown  
*Iowa State University*

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# MAXIMUM AMES MUSIC FESTIVAL



Music festivals are always the hottest spots to discover cool bands in a wide variety of genres. More importantly, it's a place for people to come together for the sake of music. This year Ames hosted its first ever Maximum Ames Music Festival, September 22-25. The festival was spread out through various locations in Ames, switching up the scene for interesting vibes.

One of the sweetest groups was Caroline Smith and The Goodnight Sleeps, who played at the Ames Progressive Space Friday night of the festival. Their style falls into a classy, folkish, original indie sound. "It's easy listening and sends a 'feel good vibe,'" says Hallie Bear, a festival music reviewer. The Sleeps are originally from Minneapolis,

Minnesota, and the lead singer/songwriter is Caroline Smith, hence the group's name. The rest of the band consists of Arlen Peiffer the drummer, Jesse Schuster the bassist, and David Earl the pianist. Caroline Smith started off as a single solo artist, but combined with the Sleeps in 2007 to create one fresh band. They are a fairly new music group and have released two new albums, "Little Wind" and "Backyard Tent Set." Be sure to check them out!

Folk indie music seems to be the trend, because The Mountain Goats rocked out the style at the DG's Tap House Saturday night. "The vocals are blunt and bring realness to the music. They are a different sounding band," Hallie Bear said. The band's lyr-

ics are created from poems written by John Darnielle, the singer/songwriter. The bassist is Peter Hugh and the Drummer is Jon Wurster. Each member is very talented and brings pizzazz to the band as a whole. The Mountain Goats originated in Claremont California in 1991, where John Darnielle started the band with a cheap guitar from a corner store. Check out the song "No Children," one of the band's fan favorites.

To shake the festival vibes up, the up and coming experimental rock/pop Xiu Xiu played at DG's Tap House late Sunday night. This group was a very friendly, laid-back bunch composed of Sam Mickens on guitar, Zac Pennington on the drums, and Jamie Steward on the guitar and vocals. "They use





background music with instrumental technical distortion which isn't present in most bands. It's what gives them their originality, along with their abstract vocals," says Bear. They pronounce their band name as "Shoo-Shoo" and got their name from a Chinese film called Xiu Xiu: The Sent-Down Girl. Their song "Boy Soprano" shows off their interesting sound and really displays the vibe of music they are going for.

Though the Ames Music Festival played host to over 50 bands, the final review goes to Euforquestra. Originally from Iowa City, they played at Bandshell park Saturday evening and offered an afro-beat, funky reggae kind of music. "They have a super funky unique sound that makes you want to get

up on your feet and dance," says Bear. The members of the band are Mike Tallman on guitar, mandolin (yes, a mandolin, google it), and vocals; Austin Zalatel with vocals and alto sax; Ryan Jetter, who does vocals as well as tenor sax; Matt Grundstad on percussion and vocals; Matt Wright on keys; and finally Ben Soltau on bass. The broad range of vocalists and different musical instruments helps to create their extraordinary sound. Listen to their hit "Soup" – it will revolutionize your world.

Keep your ears and eyes opened for next years' festival. This is sure to become an annual event due to its high success rate. SHARI SANDLER

DESIGN: KATELYN REYNOLDS  
PHOTO: KAYLA BROWN

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